

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 1, 2008

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 1629**

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**Introduced by Senator Steinberg**

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Jones)

(~~Coauthor: Assembly Member Nunez~~ Coauthors: Assembly Members  
Nunez and Arambula)

February 22, 2008

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An act to add Article 14.5 (commencing with Section 8300) to Chapter 2 of Part 6 of Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education Code, relating to state preschool programs.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1629, as amended, Steinberg. State preschool programs: ~~early learning quality improvement system~~. *Early Learning Quality Improvement System Commission*.

Existing law requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to administer state preschool programs, including part-day and preschool appropriate programs for prekindergarten children 3 to 5 years of age, inclusive, in educational development, health services, social services, nutritional services, parent education and participation, evaluation, and staff development.

This bill would ~~express the Legislature's intent to enact legislation to establish a commission to create an early learning quality improvement system, as specified~~. *establish the Early Learning Quality Improvement System Commission to develop a framework for improving program quality and a graduated funding framework that identifies necessary resources. The commission would consist of 18 members. The commission would be required to develop the policy and plan for an Early Learning Quality Improvement System, and would be required*

*to submit a report on its recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor by December 31, 2009. The bill would require the State Department of Education to provide staff to support the commission, and would require the commission to apply to the California Children and Families Commission for funding to cover costs. The bill would specify that the Early Learning Quality Improvement System be phased in to the extent funds are made available. The bill would become operative only if AB 2759 of the 2008–09 Regular Session of the Legislature is enacted and becomes effective on or before January 1, 2009.*

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~ yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1     SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the  
2     following:
- 3     (a) Learning begins at the earliest stages of life and research  
4     shows that preschool is a proven investment in the academic  
5     success of children and their success later in life. A high-quality  
6     preschool system would benefit California children, the state's  
7     systems of public and higher education, its families and students,  
8     and its economy overall.
- 9     (b) Effective preschool provides eager young learners with early  
10    academic and social skills that prepare them for later learning.  
11    Developing these skills requires developmentally appropriate,  
12    intentional instruction from skilled teachers.
- 13    (c) Unfortunately, too many children are turned away from  
14    preschool, and the children who lack access to preschool are  
15    disproportionately children of color, children whose home language  
16    is not English, and children whose parents did not graduate from  
17    high school. Research has shown that only one-half of all eligible  
18    children in California are enrolled in a state preschool or the federal  
19    Head Start program.
- 20    (d) Currently, California's preschool programs consist of both  
21    state and federally funded programs for the provision of part-day  
22    and full-day preschool and child care.
- 23    (e) According to the National Institute of Early Education  
24    Research, California's state preschool programs meet only four of  
25    10 benchmarks for quality preschool. A vast body of research

1 shows that only high-quality preschool results in the child outcomes  
2 and cost-benefits widely attributed to preschool.

3 (f) The myriad of state child development programs that serve  
4 children 3 to 5 years of age, inclusive, are unnecessarily complex;  
5 programs are not rewarded or given enough support to achieve the  
6 high-quality learning environments that our most disadvantaged  
7 children need and deserve.

8 (g) In order to take full advantage of the integral role that a  
9 quality preschool system plays in helping prepare children for  
10 school, which would benefit the state's most vulnerable pupils and  
11 children from low-income families, including English language  
12 learners, California must create a more coherent and efficient  
13 publicly funded preschool program and lay the groundwork for  
14 high quality. Consolidating and streamlining the state's preschool  
15 program within existing revenues and expenditures and creating  
16 a system that rewards programs that provide higher quality learning  
17 environments would greatly increase California's ability to bridge  
18 the achievement gap.

19 (h) Making the necessary investments to expand the state's  
20 preschool system while the state faces a budget shortfall will be  
21 difficult, but important steps can be taken now to put in place the  
22 framework for a high-quality prekindergarten system upon which  
23 future expansion can be built.

24 SEC. 2. It is the intent of the Legislature to ~~enact legislation~~  
25 ~~that would do the following:~~

26 ~~(a) Establish a commission to create an early learning quality~~  
27 ~~improvement system to develop a framework for assessing program~~  
28 ~~quality and a tiered reimbursement framework that provides the~~  
29 ~~necessary resources for programs to achieve higher quality and~~  
30 ~~that provides the support and opportunity for teachers to reach~~  
31 ~~higher levels of educational attainment.~~

32 ~~(b) Require the commission to ensure that there is a process for~~  
33 ~~meaningful public input prior to submitting its recommendations~~  
34 ~~and that the quality improvement system will be phased in as funds~~  
35 ~~are available.~~

36 *establish the Early Learning Quality Improvement System*  
37 *Commission to develop a framework for improving program quality*  
38 *and a graduated funding framework that identifies the necessary*  
39 *resources for programs to achieve and maintain higher quality,*

1 *and the support and opportunity for teachers to reach higher levels*  
2 *of education.*

3 *SEC. 3. Article 14.5 (commencing with Section 8300) is added*  
4 *to Chapter 2 of Part 6 of Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education*  
5 *Code, to read:*

6  
7 *Article 14.5. Early Learning Quality Improvement System*  
8 *Commission*  
9

10 *8300. (a) The Early Learning Quality Improvement System*  
11 *Commission is hereby established in the state government. The*  
12 *commission shall consist of 18 members as follows:*

13 *(1) The Superintendent of Public Instruction, who shall chair*  
14 *and convene the commission, or his or her designee.*

15 *(2) The Secretary of Education or his or her designee.*

16 *(3) The President pro Tempore of the Senate or his or her*  
17 *designee.*

18 *(4) The Speaker of the Assembly or his or her designee.*

19 *(5) The Chair of the California Children and Families*  
20 *Commission or his or her designee.*

21 *(6) The University of California Office of the President or his*  
22 *or her designee.*

23 *(7) The Chancellor of the California State University or his or*  
24 *her designee.*

25 *(8) The Chancellor of the California Community College system*  
26 *or his or her designee.*

27 *(9) The Chair of the California Commission on Teacher*  
28 *Credentialing or his or her designee.*

29 *(10) The Director of Social Services or his or her designee.*

30 *(11) The Governor shall appoint one representative from each*  
31 *of the following communities, and the Speaker of the Assembly*  
32 *and President pro Tempore of the Senate shall collaborate in*  
33 *appointing one representative from each of the following*  
34 *communities:*

35 *(A) Early care and education.*

36 *(B) The K-12 public school system.*

37 *(C) English language learners.*

38 *(D) Parents.*

39 *(b) The commission shall seek expertise from the following*  
40 *areas: English language development; exceptional needs;*

1 workforce development; facilities development; technical  
2 assistance; and local quality improvement systems.

3 (c) The commission shall meet no less frequently than each  
4 quarter of the fiscal year and at the call of the chair at a time and  
5 location convenient to the public, as it may deem appropriate. All  
6 meetings shall be open to the public in accordance with Article 9  
7 (commencing with Section 11120) of Chapter 1 of Part 1 of  
8 Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

9 (d) The appointed members of the commission shall serve at  
10 the pleasure of their appointing authority.

11 (e) The members of the commission shall be entitled to  
12 reimbursement for expenses and members appointed pursuant to  
13 paragraph (11) of subdivision (a) shall be entitled to a per diem  
14 of one hundred dollars (\$100) per day.

15 8301. (a) The commission shall develop the policy and  
16 implementation plan for an Early Learning Quality Improvement  
17 System for the state and shall submit a report containing its  
18 recommendations for the creation of an Early Learning Quality  
19 Improvement System to the Legislature and the Governor by  
20 December 31, 2009. The report shall address, but need not be  
21 limited to, the following four elements of a quality improvement  
22 system:

23 (1) The development of a preschool quality rating system. The  
24 commission shall consider consumer awareness so that parents  
25 receive accurate information about the type of program in which  
26 their children are enrolled. The commission also shall consider,  
27 but need not be limited to, the following features of high quality  
28 preschool programs:

29 (A) Developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate  
30 practices.

31 (B) Staff qualifications and professional development and  
32 education needs.

33 (C) Staff compensation and retention.

34 (D) Group size and ratios.

35 (E) Learning environment.

36 (F) Regulatory compliance.

37 (G) Articulation with systems of care for children from birth to  
38 three years of age, and with the K-12 public school system.

39 (H) The inclusion of children with exceptional needs.

40 (I) English language learner support.

1     (J) Family involvement.

2     (2) The development of a graduated funding model aligned with  
3 the quality rating system that provides the necessary resources for  
4 preschool programs to achieve higher quality levels, and that  
5 supports continuous program quality improvement.

6     (3) An assessment and analysis of the existing early care and  
7 education infrastructure including an identification of the strengths,  
8 gaps, and barriers to achieving higher quality early learning  
9 programs. This analysis shall identify strategies that ensure the  
10 existing early care and education workforce, which reflects the  
11 cultural and linguistic diversity of California, has the opportunity  
12 to meet any higher levels of education qualifications recommended  
13 by the commission, while also meeting the diverse needs of  
14 California's young children.

15     (4) The development of strategies for addressing children from  
16 birth to three years of age within the Early Learning Quality  
17 Improvement System.

18     (b) The commission shall conduct no less than four public  
19 hearings in different parts of the state to ensure that the  
20 commission obtains meaningful public input prior to submitting  
21 its report to the Governor and the Legislature.

22     8302. The State Department of Education shall provide staff  
23 support to the commission.

24     8303. The commission shall apply to the California Children  
25 and Families Commission for funding to cover costs, including,  
26 but not limited to, staff support, travel expenses, and per diem  
27 costs. The commission is also authorized to seek funding from  
28 other sources.

29     8304. The Early Learning Quality Improvement System shall  
30 be phased in to the extent that federal, state, or local public funds  
31 are made available.

32     SEC. 4. This act shall become operative only if Assembly Bill  
33 2759 of the 2008–09 Regular Session of the Legislature is enacted  
34 and becomes operative on or before January 1, 2009.

35     SEC. 5. This act shall be binding upon the University of  
36 California only to the extent that the Regents of the University of  
37 California, by resolution, make it binding.